



Spider Dreams



An Imprint of:
Sacred Wolf Inc

Seipeal de na Nathrach

(Temple of the Serpent)

A Four-Part Metadventure for the

Dungeons and Dragons® 3rd Edition
Role Playing Game



Dungeons and Dragons® and the D20 logo™ Wizards of the Coast

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Spider Dreams presents...

Seipeal de na Nathrach

(“Temple of the Snake”)

Parts 3 and 4

This metadventure (meta-adventure) is designed for 5-7 characters, using the **Dungeons and Dragons 3rd Edition**® rules. Four separate adventures are presented here for different character levels. These may be used as stand-alone adventures, or may be worked into a campaign as a sub-plot.

The first part of “Seipeal de na Nathrach” (for character levels 1-3) is set in an area near a mine or other underground structure. The second (character levels 4-6) may be used in any rural environment, somewhat isolated from larger towns or cities. The third (character levels 5-9) involves the discovery of the ruins of an ancient temple in a wilderness area, the Truagh Dolmens. The fourth (character levels 10-12) brings the first three together, with an ancient civilization rising up against the modern world, which seeks its final destruction. This meta-adventure may be adapted to fit any fantasy campaign setting.

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Part 3:

Shrine Out of Time

Malairt and The Truagh Dolmens

This part of the metadventure takes place near Malairt, a trading post near a dwarven stronghold in the foothills of a mountain range. The town lies in a mountainous region, in a small valley that encompasses the Truagh Dolmens and Lake Linn Cumha. It is removed from civilization, about three days’ ride from the nearest cities. The road that leads by it is used mainly by merchants and traders; a more direct route of travel between cities is used by other citizens. The trade with the dwarves is recent, and the post has been in place less than a decade. The citizens of Malairt have no interest in leaving the town. The Truagh Dolmens are untamed, and hold more dangers than opportunities.

Malairt has around 350 residents, about 70% human, 20% dwarven, with elves and half-elves comprising the remaining 10%. Most of the population are merchants, or in the service of merchants; craftsmen; or businessmen. There are 90 guards who enforce the law, patrol the walls and streets, and repel attacks from the outside. The goods available in Malairt are common; quality goods and most magic items are taken to other cities, or traded to the dwarves, for a higher profit.

It is a quiet, slow-moving town. The merchants and inhabitants are friendly and slow to anger, and deceptively peaceful. They don't want trouble, and most will summon the guards at the first sign of a potential conflict. The guards take no chances, and will incarcerate (or kill) anyone who disturbs the peace. The majority of the citizens are armed with swords or other small to medium sized melee weapons, and have some training in combat. Carrying a melee weapon in town is not only allowed, it's recommended. Ranged weapons and more than one weapon, however, are not allowed outside of official guardsmen.

Malairt was built in a series of concentric circles, each with a defensible wall. The center, where the original trading post stood, has become the main bazaar where the trading with the dwarves of Bloodforge is conducted. The second ring is comprised of official buildings and the temple district (there are three main temples: one to a deity of commerce, one to a deity of travel, and one to a deity of protection), along with the merchants. The third ring houses the main guard barracks. The fourth holds the commoners' quarters, and the outside ring holds the marketplace. The bazaar is open to merchants, and unknown to outsiders; this is where the citizens go to obtain higher-quality goods at a reasonable price. The marketplace is almost solely used by travelers and merchants' retainers; most of the goods are of average quality, and the prices are set at double the amount in a larger city.

The townspeople, though friendly, are wary of outsiders. They will not volunteer information, unless it will profit them in some way, or shorten the stay of outsiders. Most of the inhabitants know little of the Truagh Dolmens (and less about the massacre of the Serpent Guard). They know of the dwarven stronghold in the north, and that the grevants come from the Dolmens in the northeast to raid. Stories of terrible beasts and demoniac creatures in the bogs are enough to stem their curiosity. There is no wealth in getting killed. There are also rumors of a cosmopolis (a "City of Stars") in Lake Linn Cumha. The priests of the local temples have some information about the massacre; one of their high priests escaped to warn Malairt of an attack from creatures in the northwest. The attack was swift and carried out at night, so the priest knew little of it, and did not survive long after the massacre. He only knew that they were attacked by agents of Riaghail.

The road by Malairt passes by the Truagh Dolmens, and runs almost parallel to the edge of the Dolmens. It is, at its nearest point, a half-mile from the Dolmens. The dwarven stronghold, Bloodforge, lies beneath the mountains at the eastern edge. The Truagh Dolmens are a thick-wooded forest in the foothills, inhabited by wild animals, hobgoblins, ogres, trolls, and other humanoid races. Parts of the Dolmens are pitted with bogs, where small streams and rivulets gather in recesses in the hills. Lizardfolk and will-o'-wisps are common in these small marshes. Before the massacre, the area was protected and watched over by a group of elves, humans, and dwarves who ensured that the Temple of the Serpent

remained closed, and its inhabitants were kept cloistered from the outside. *The Serpent Guard*, as they were known, watched over The Truagh Dolmens for over one thousand years. They were largely forgotten, and their purpose was kept secret from the dwarves in Bloodforge after the stronghold was built, although they did interact with the newcomers. When Malairt was built, the Serpent Guard chose to remain hidden, working in the shadows. Before the massacre, the Serpent Guard were regarded as little more than a band of hermits.

The Serpent Guard

The Serpent Guard is an ancient society established by the Old gods to keep the followers of Riaghail in check. For thousands of years, they commanded a legion of sentinels to ensure the internment of Riaghail's active followers. As the centuries passed, and Riaghail moved into obscurity, the society found it more and more difficult to keep its followers. During the last two centuries, the Serpent Guard dwindled to a mere two dozen (before the massacre). Those that remained worked to gain more power to retain their control over the children of Riaghail. However, as their numbers waned, the followers of Riaghail increased their efforts to open the way for Riaghail to return.

The Serpent Guard utilized the strengths of every walk of life, and every profession. They took nothing for granted, except that their legions would remain strong. The members of the Serpent Guard were given the *Ring of the Serpent Guard* as a means of identification and added protection against their sworn enemies. Most of these rings have been lost to time; few are found outside of The Truagh Dolmens. The handful that remain have become heirlooms (such as Cornelius Ironbeard's).

Ring of the Serpent Guard: This gold ring is shaped more like an arc than a ring; a small piece of it has been removed at the top, so that the ends do not meet. It has been forged to look like a serpent eating its own tail, whose head has been severed in the process. It grants the wearer +2 to all rolls made against reptilian creatures (including snakes, lizards, lizardfolk, dragons, and so on). This includes attack rolls, damage, and saving throws.

The Serpent Guard (prestige class)

Hit Dice: d8

Requirements: Any prospective member of the Serpent Guard must be given an invitation from an existing member of the society, who has advanced at least five levels of Serpent Guard, unless the prospective member has an ancestor who had served in the Guard.

Class skills: Concentration (CON), Craft (INT), Decipher Script (INT), Gather Information (CHA), Heal (WIS), Hide (DEX), Knowledge (any, INT), Listen (WIS), Move Silently (DEX), Profession (WIS), Search (INT), Sense Motive (WIS), Spot (WIS), Survival (WIS).

Skill points per level: 4 + INT modifier.

Spells: +1 to existing class (if a spellcaster) per level; otherwise, a bonus feat is gained at 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th level.

Level	Base Att. Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special
1	+0	+1	+1	+0	+2 to Dex and Con
2	+1	+1	+2	+0	+1 save vs. venom
3	+1	+2	+3	+1	Slippery Mind
4	+2	+2	+3	+1	1 st Favored Enemy, +2 save vs. venom
5	+2	+3	+4	+1	Serpentskin (+2 Nat. AC bonus)
6	+3	+3	+4	+2	+3 save vs. venom
7	+3	+4	+5	+2	2 nd Favored Enemy
8	+4	+4	+5	+3	+4 save vs. venom
9	+4	+4	+6	+3	Lizardskin (+4 total Nat. AC bonus)
10	+5	+5	+6	+3	3 rd Favored Enemy, immune to venom

Class features: The following are features of the Serpent Guard prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Serpent Guard is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and light armor.

Stat bump: At first level, the training of the Serpent Guard gives them a permanent +2 points to their Constitution and Dexterity scores.

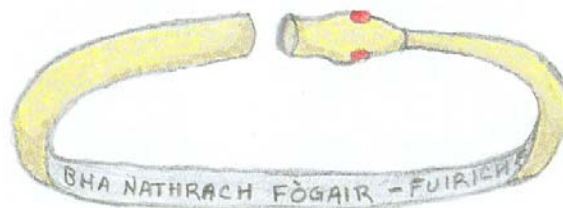
Save bonus vs. venom: The Serpent Guard practices rituals that boost their tolerance of animal poisons. The bonus to the save vs. venom applies to all saves against natural animal venoms, such as a viper's or spider's.

Slippery Mind: If a Serpent Guard is affected by an enchantment and fails her saving throw, 1 round later she can attempt her saving throw again. She only gets this one extra chance to succeed at her saving throw. If it fails as well, the spell's effects occur normally.

Favored Enemy: The Serpent Guard gains favored enemies, with the bonuses that rangers gain. However, the favored enemies must be reptilian.

Serpentskin/Lizardskin: As Serpent Guards attain higher levels, their skin becomes tougher from the rituals that they perform, and gives them a natural AC bonus. The maximum bonus that they may be given this way is +4 (+2 at 5th level, and another +2 at 9th).

Venom Immunity: Upon reaching 10th level, the Serpent Guard becomes fully immune to all venoms from living creatures. They are, however, still susceptible to other poisons.



Ring of the Serpent Guard

Into The Truagh Dolmens

The journey into the Truagh Dolmens is not difficult. However, the inhabitants of the Dolmens dislike outsiders. Attacks are frequent, and few non-adventurers escape. The Serpent Guard helped to ensure the safety of adventuresome souls, as the creatures of the Dolmens kept their distance from them. Such was the power of their druids. It was a dark and stormy night when they were attacked, though, and they were caught unaware. Now that the Guard no longer holds the Dolmens, the inhabitants of the Temple of the Serpent and their allies are beginning to expand into the outer world. They patrol the Dolmens, and are claiming the territory as a platform for their invasion of the surface world.

The forest of the Truagh Dolmens extends along the road, and is mottled with bogs and marshes. The whole of the Dolmens is thick with trees and brush, and offer limited visibility to about 40' and ranged weapons are only effective to that distance. (All Hide checks gain a +4 circumstance bonus. Intuit Direction checks suffer a -4 penalty.) The thick canopy keeps light in the Truagh Dolmens minimal; sunlight and moonlight are halved in their effect, and starlight is negated. The swampy areas are deep (10 feet to 50 feet), though only about 30 feet across, sinkholes that have filled with fetid water. There are traces of trails used by the Grevants to and from their lair, as they use fairly set paths. The other creatures leave little trace of their passage (not enough of a trail to track from). Scattered throughout the Dolmens are abandoned burrows once used by badgers, wolverines, and such; they now have spiraling spider webs lining them (use the "Large Spider" entry on the Random Encounter table). There is an absence of mammalian life in the Truagh Dolmens. Snakes, spiders, and lizards have taken over, along with a smaller number of amphibians, mostly toads and frogs. Once the characters enter the Truagh Dolmens, random encounters should be rolled.

The landmarks in the Truagh Dolmens are the site of the massacre of the Serpent Guard, the Grevant Lair, and the hidden Temple of the Serpent. The entrance to the Bloodforge is carved into a cliff face above the Dolmens.

The Site of the Massacre

The site of the massacre of the Serpent Guard is in a large clearing, 150 feet in diameter. The bodies of at least two dozen humans and demi-humans (various elves, half-elves, and dwarves) have been placed around the clearing. Some are hanging from trees, some are held upright by spears, and some have been decapitated and left headless. The bodies are otherwise intact, and lack any sign of damage from carrion feeders. They all have their gear and items (25-36 random magic items), and all wear their *Serpent Rings*. (Looting the bodies is considered desecration by the authorities in Malairt, and by the priests. If the bodies are returned to the town without their equipment, an investigation will be carried out.) The clearing was a sacred meeting-place for the Serpent Guard, since it has a close proximity to the Temple of the Serpent. Prior to the massacre, the ground was consecrated; it has been desecrated by the murders. There

is one living being in the clearing; Meallta Duine (see: “NPCs”). He has an *Aura of Good* spell in effect at all times. He will claim that he fled the massacre, and hid in the forest after being wounded. He asserts that the grevants carried out the massacre, and stole his *Serpent Ring*, sensing the magic that it radiated, before they were driven off by a will-o’-wisp. He will say that they planned to attack Malairt once the Serpent Guard was gone, and that the bodies were left in the clearing as a message to any who found them. He will offer to assist the characters in bringing the killers to justice, and avenge the deaths of the Serpent Guard. (He will wait until the characters are weakened before he turns on them.) He will allow the *Aura* to wear off once he has the trust of a party of adventurers.

Meallta will do everything in his power to divert the characters from the Temple of the Serpent. His ultimate goal is to remove all humanoids not loyal to the Nathriadh from the Truagh Dolmens.

The rest of the story...

In Part Three, the characters continue to explore the Truagh Dolmens, and find the source of the rebirth of Riaghail’s cult. Will they be able to stop them in time to hold back the assault? Or will they have time to warn the outside world of the coming war?

Of course not. There needs to be a Part Four.

The drow and the children of Riaghail have massed an army to begin their hostile takeover of the surface world. Meanwhile, the Nathriadh prepare for the return of their ancient master. It could be the end of the world as the characters know it.

Also, there are new *prestige classes*, new *spells*, new *creatures*, and new NPCs (along with updated old ones)!



New Creatures:

*Here's a sample of one of the new creatures in Seipeal de na Nathrach, Parts 3 & 4
(The full entry for these and other creatures will be in Seipeal de na Nathrach, Parts 3 & 4)*

NATHRIADH

Humanoid (reptilian/ magical)

subtype

Hit Dice:

Initiative:

Speed:

AC:

Attacks:

Damage:

Face/Reach:

Special Attacks:

Special Qualities:

Saves:

Abilities:

Feats:

Climate/Terrain:

Organization:

Challenge Rating:

Treasure:

Alignment:

Advancement:

Air (gray)

5d8+5

+9 (+5 D, +4 Imp. Init.)

30'

19 (+5 D, +2 Nat., +2 Leather)

claw/ claw (melee) or weapon/ weapon (see below)

claw: 1d4+2 or by weapon type

5 feet by 5 feet/ 5 feet

wind wall (at will)

Immune to air-based attacks, Heat Sense, Control Wind

Fort +1, Reflex +6, Will +7

S 10, D 20, C 11, I 18, W 16, Ch 14

Improved Initiative, Blind-fight, Expertise, Improved Disarm

Any (usually underground)

Solitary, Band (3-6), or Society (18-29)

6

Standard

Neutral Evil

By Character Class

Nathriadh are the first children of Riaghail to form societies. They are the forerunners of the reptilian races, and are thought to be more ancient than the elven races. Few remain; they lost much of their power when Riaghail was banished from the Material plane. Those who survived turned to the elements to retain some power.

They stand 5-7' tall, and resemble thin, soft-skinned lizardfolk. Five subraces are in existence, and are differentiated by their skin color, and the element which they derive their power from: red (fire), blue (water), gray (air), brown (earth), and yellow (electricity). All wear light armor, and use crescent axes or broadswords in combat. They use longbows for ranged combat.

Nathriadh characters: Each subtype has a different preferred class. The fire subtype prefers sorcerer; the water subtype prefers cleric; the air subtype prefers wizard; the earth subtype prefers barbarian, and the electricity subtype prefers bard. However, almost every class may be represented within a subtype.

